* Government has already identified several 'Last mile projects' under various ministries for speedy completion.

* DIPP has proposed to conduct sector-wise studies in respect of capital goods, electrical manufacturing, pulp and paper and cement industries with a view to enhance the competitiveness of these industries.

* Medium term Export strategy for 2002-07 has been formulated to increase the share of exports from 06% to 1% by 2006-07.

* Union Budget 2002-03 has abolished 16% special excise duty on all, except eight items.

* Additional 15% depreciation on new plant and machinery has been proposed.

Ban on import of coconut

*422. SHRI H.K. JAVARE GOWDA: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that large scale import of coconut and its products has caused price crash in Karnataka and other States, if so, the details thereof;

(b) whether the State Government of Karnataka has requested Government to ban the import of coconut and its products; and

(c) if so, the details of the steps taken so far in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI MURASOLI MARAN): (a) to (c) The prices of coconut and its products in the year 2001-02 have been higher than those in the previous year.

In August 2000, there was a suggestion from Government of Karnataka to ban import of coconut and its products. Imports of such products are being regulated through tariff mechanism. The import duty on coconut and copra were raised from 35% to 70% and that on

coconut oil from 45% to 85% in the budget for year 2001-02. In the current year, imports of coconut and its products have been around 20000 MT which is 0.05% of average annual domestic production. Out of this, imports of coconut oil have essentially taken place under Advance License for re-export after value addition.

Service tax regime

*423. SHRI RAMAMUNI REDDY SIRIGIREDDY: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the service tax regime is set to go on-line;

(b) whether it is also a fact that it has been introduced on an experimental basis in Mumbai;

(c) whether any study has been carried out in this regard; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI GINGEE N. RAMACHANDRAN): (a) Service tax regime is not yet set to go on line.

(b) No Sir.

(c) and (d) M/s CMC Ltd. were engaged by Director General (Service Tax) to conduct a study on service tax automation and the report of CMC has since been received. They have recommended implementation of the project in four phases spanning, approximately $1\frac{1}{2}$ years.